

## Utah Asthma Task Force

# Utah's Asthma Chronicle

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## Winning With Asthma.org is Making a Difference

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and the Utah Asthma Task Force recently teamed up with several community youth organizations to launch an online asthma educational tool. The 30-minute Winning With Asthma program is available online at [www.WinningWithAsthma.org](http://www.WinningWithAsthma.org) and is targeted toward coaches, referees, physical education teachers and anyone involved in youth sports about asthma.

asthma while participating in sports. "The best thing a coach can do to help an athlete with asthma is understand when they're having a hard time breathing and what triggers their asthma. I want to compete just like anyone else, but I need to make sure my asthma is under control and a coach is a part of that," said now 14-year-old Hugie.

The program also highlights local professional coaches—Jerry Sloan with the Utah Jazz and John Ellinger with the Salt Lake REAL soccer team. The program teaches:

- Proper medication management
- Ways to prevent exercise-induced asthma
- Steps to take when athletes are experiencing asthma attacks
- Asthma triggers, what they are and what can be done to avoid them
- Guidelines specific for cold-weather sports

Those who complete the program receive a booklet with additional asthma in-

formation and a coach's clipboard with "What to Do During an Asthma Attack" printed on the back.

"This is a great program for everyone that is involved with adolescents. I am a nurse at a state detention facility, and learned a few things from this program. Thank you!"

Local partners who have participated in the development or promotion of the program include Salt Lake Parks and Recreation, Jewish Community Center of Salt Lake, Utah State Office of Education, Utah Youth Soccer League, Logan City Parks and Recreation, Sandy City Parks and Recreation and many high school coaches and referees.

For additional information or to order promotional materials, visit [www.health.utah.gov/asthma/wwwa.html](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma/wwwa.html) or call 801-538-6141.

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"The information I learned through the online program was not only educational but was instrumental in keeping me focused as I applied proper care I learned, when a player had an asthma attack during a game just a few weeks later."

The program has been very successful and helps individuals like Whitney Hugie, who was 7 years old when diagnosed with asthma. She is part of a family of siblings that manages their

## Utah's Asthma School Manual is on the move

The Utah Asthma School Resource Manual, developed by members of the Utah Asthma Task Force and pilot tested in several schools in 2003, is now finishing up its second year of full implementation. The purpose of the manual is to educate school faculty on the importance of asthma management in schools, as well as providing a resource for making schools "asthma friendly".

The response of this manual has been very positive— with one school even contacting their local school nurse asking for another copy after misplacing the original.

After two years of implementation the school manual, companioned

with a 45-minute asthma basics presentation, has been brought to over 140 schools, reaching nearly 4,000 faculty members, including a few schools down south in Iron and Washington counties.

The program's success is due in part to dedicated interns from colleges and universities around the state have worked hard to implement the program in many schools over a short period of time. School nurses and administrators, have played an important role by working with interns to



schedule the program in schools. It has been a team effort and the support and encouragement from schools throughout the state is appreciated.

Applications are currently being accepted for the 06-07 Asthma School Resource Manual Internship. If you know of someone interested in completing an internship for the Utah Department of Health's Asthma Program or know of a school interested in receiving the training, please contact **Cherissa** at [cherissaw@utahlung.org](mailto:cherissaw@utahlung.org) for more information.

## Health Study in Schools says Indoor Air is better than Outdoor

The Hawthorne Health Study is in its second phase headed by the Utah Asthma Task Force Risk Factor's Action Group.

The project began as concerns were raised about children going out for recess during periods of increased particulate pollution. Because there was no clear source of consistent information about when children should stay inside, guidelines were developed by an expert panel.

The study's purpose is to determine if it is beneficial to children with

asthma or other chronic lung problems to stay inside on days with poor air quality. The project began as a two-part study. *Phase I* was to collect simultaneous measurements of indoor and outdoor air quality at Hawthorne Elementary School in Salt Lake City. Air samples were collected from December 2004 to March 2005 by the Department of Environmental Quality and then analyzed. The results showed air quality was three times better indoors than outdoors on inversion days. *Phase II* ran from December 2005 to March 2006 by identifying

all children with asthma in the school using a validated questionnaire. Once identified, children with asthma were invited to participate in a clinical study to determine the effects of various levels of particulate pollution had on pulmonary function tests using spirometry. Children were tested before and after recess on good, fair and poor air quality days. Results from Phase II should be released by July 2006.

For more information, contact Steve Packham at 801-536-4036.

## A Unique Workshop for the Community

The Utah Asthma Task Force and the Utah Department of Health's Genomics Program teamed up to present a workshop focusing on the unique role genomics will play in the future of asthma in Utah.

Topics included genomics— what it is and why the hype, pharmacogenomics— the study of how an individual's genetic makeup affects their response to drugs, family health history— how a family's shared genetics, environment, culture, lifestyle, and behaviors can have an affect on a person's risk of developing disease, and the ethical, legal,

and social issues behind this upcoming research. Experts were invited from varying backgrounds and interests. Following each presentation, members of the audience had an opportunity to come together in small groups to determine priorities for the Utah Asthma Task Force. The last two hours of the workshop were used to bring Asthma Task Force members, as well as community partners together to discuss genomic priorities as discussed earlier, and then identify specific goals and objectives the task force should begin working on as part of the Utah Asthma Plan. Goals and objectives

for the Task Force are expected to come out July 2006.

For more information, please go to [www.health.utah.gov/asthma/genomicsworkshop.html](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma/genomicsworkshop.html) or contact [cherissaw@utahlung.org](mailto:cherissaw@utahlung.org).



## Task Force Champion



Steve Packham, PhD is a toxicologist with the Utah Department of Environmental Quality for the past 10 years. He is also known internationally for his work with fire and prevention strategies. Steve Packham is a passionate, committed and influential individual. He provides tremendous strength and depth to the Utah Asthma Task Force and is influential in implementing several asthma strategies. Dr. Packham has been an active member of the task force since the Asthma Program received funding in late 2001. He has served as the

chair of the Risk Factors sub-committee, recruited partners and pioneered asthma initiatives. In June 2004, Mr. Packham led an important initiative that provided air quality guidance for local health departments, school districts, parents, and others with asthma. This *"Guidance for schools; When to schedule indoor rather than outdoor activities based on the air quality in your communities"* was developed by the Utah Departments of Environmental Quality and Health and more than 20 other key partners. The guidance was released in August 2004 at a press conference, and then distributed to school dis-

tricts, school nurses, local health departments and posted on the appropriate websites. School districts welcomed the guidance with many immediately implementing it. Numerous stories in newspapers have highlighted the guidance and the effects of air quality on children's health. Dr. Packham has been involved in applying for and receiving funding from the Environmental Protection agency, Region 10 to implement EPA's Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools program. He has also been instrumental in initiating occupational asthma initiatives, and understanding how geonomics applies to public health.

## Utah Partners for Health Educate Communities About Asthma

Utah Partners for Health (formerly Magna Communities for Family Medicine Foundation) was provided a mini-grant through the Utah Asthma Program in September of 2005 to educate local communities and physicians about asthma. Their activities in the community have included participating in several health fairs and holding a community meeting in an elementary school to educate the public about asthma. Utah Partners for Health (UPH) also educates physicians on current

asthma diagnosis and treatment guidelines and about proper pulmonary function testing. Additionally, to better treat and follow-up with their patients with asthma, UPH has a new Electronic Medical Records template for asthma, which is currently being utilized. They have also provided patient education material to over 50 patients.

Utah Partners for Health continues to be a strength in their communities by providing an "Ask the

Doc" column in local newspapers that will highlight topics such as asthma. Utah Partners for Health is doing a fantastic job with educating their local communities and providers about asthma while providing medical care to people who are not insured or cannot afford medical care. Thank you for all you do!

For more information, please contact Kurt Micka at 801-250-9638 ext 131.

## Older Adults with Asthma Public Awareness Campaign

In September of 2005, a review of data and literature demonstrated a drastic difference in older adults with asthma compared to younger adults with asthma: the older adults

**Older adults are much more difficult to diagnose with asthma because symptoms are similar to symptoms of COPD.**

were hospitalized almost twice as frequently, for almost twice as long, and with almost twice the cost. According to providers that serve

on Utah Asthma Task Force action groups, older adults are much more difficult to diagnose with asthma because the symptoms of asthma in this population are similar to symptoms of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), and there is a possibility of both asthma and COPD existing in the same person. Additionally, these providers report that complications occur with co-existing chronic illnesses the older adult may have, as well as challenges with medications used to treat heart-related and other illnesses.

Based on these facts, the Older Adults with Asthma Action Group

identified the need to educate older adults with asthma about their disease and related topics. A *Check Your Health* segment was filmed and aired in March, four presentations on asthma and other related topics were presented, and a community forum was held to educate older adults with asthma about their disease. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive regarding the presentations, and many participants asked for additional information and more presentations. The Older Adults with Asthma Action Group worked furiously on making March a great public awareness month for older adults with asthma. Thank you for all your hard work!



If you would like more information regarding this newsletter or you have a story you would like to include in the next volume, please contact Cherissa Wood.

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## UTAH ASTHMA TASK FORCE

We're on the web at:

[www.health.utah.gov/asthma](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma)

## New Data Reports...

### Emergency Department Report:

The Utah Department of Health's Asthma Program has released its first asthma emergency department report, which is a descriptive analysis of emergency department visits that occurred between 2001-2003. The report focuses on treat and release emergency department encounters and does not include persons treated and then admitted to the hospital due to asthma. If you have any questions please contact Jess Agraz at [jagraz@utah.gov](mailto:jagraz@utah.gov). It is available online at [www.health.utah.gov/asthma](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma).

### Asthma School Survey:

The Asthma School Survey was sent to faculty and staff of over 80 elementary schools statewide to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of asthma in the schools. Debra Jensen presented the results of the school survey project at the April 4th Task Force Meeting. If you have any questions, please contact Jess Agraz at [jagraz@utah.gov](mailto:jagraz@utah.gov)

## Take A Look At What's Coming Up...

### June 2006

**1st-** "Asthma Mini Grant Pre-Application" available. The Utah Department of Health's Asthma Program will be awarding several mini grants for 2006-2007. Contact Cherissa Wood at [cherissaw@utahlung.org](mailto:cherissaw@utahlung.org) for more information.

**8th-** School Resource Manual Intern training. Time and location to be announced.

**17th-** "Asthma Walk" Sponsored by the American Lung Association of Utah, please join us and help us *Blow the Whistle on Asthma*. Contact Hailey Watanabe at 801-484-4456 for more information.

### July 2006

**3rd-** "Asthma Mini-Grant RFP" available. Contact Cherissa Wood at [cherissaw@utahlung.org](mailto:cherissaw@utahlung.org) for more information.

**11th-** "Asthma Task Force Meeting" Located at the Salt Lake County Environmental Health Building (788 East Woodoak Lane- 5380 South). Contact Libbey Chuy at [Ichuy@utah.gov](mailto:Ichuy@utah.gov) for more information.

**17th-21st-** "Camp Wyatt" Camp Wyatt is the only camp in the Intermountain area to cater solely to children (ages 8-14) with asthma. During July children from across the Wasatch Front, and from as far away as St. George, meet at Camp Wyatt in the foothills of Tooele for an old fashioned camping experience. Please call Hailey for more specific information at 801-484-4456 or email [hailey@utahlung.org](mailto:hailey@utahlung.org).

